REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

No claims are currently being canceled.

Claims 1, 8, and 12 are currently being amended.

Claims 16-20 are currently being added.

This amendment amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-20 are now pending in this application.

In the Advisory Action mailed February, 20, 2004, claims 1-15 remain rejected based on the rejections made in the final Office Action (mailed October 29, 2003), whereby the Advisory Action asserts that "Aoki discloses a network system to select a printer based upon selection information provided by the terminal (Column 5, lines 25-50 as previously cited)." Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejections made in the final Office Action (as reiterated in the Advisory Action).

102(e) Rejection Based on Aoki:

In the final Office Action, claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,631,008 to Aoki.

In particular, column 5, lines 25 to 50 (which were pointed out in the Advisory Action) discloses the following features:

When a server receives a printing instruction from a terminal, the server selects a plurality of "candidate" printers for printing data transmission and informs the terminal about the candidate printers. The user selects a printer from the list of candidate printers that the user wants to use for printing the print job, and notifies the server of the selected printer by way of a command

sent from the terminal. After the user selects the printer, the terminal outputs image data to the server. The server transmits the image data from the terminal to the printer selected in the manner described above.

In Aoki, the printing instruction output from the terminal is not an image-forming job (image data). <u>Rather, the image forming job (image data) is transmitted from the terminal only to the printer that has been finally selected by the user.</u>

In the present invention, an image forming job is transmitted from the terminal to the image-forming-job managing apparatus and stored in the job storage section of the image-forming-job managing apparatus. Thereafter, when a job output destination change command is transmitted from the terminal to the image-forming-job managing apparatus, the image forming job stored in the job storage section is transmitted to another image-forming-job managing apparatus, that is, to another destination.

As explained above, in Aoki, an image forming job which has been transmitted from the terminal to an image-forming-job managing apparatus is <u>not</u> sent to another image-forming-job managing apparatus depending upon a job output destination change command sent from the terminal.

Claims 1, 8 and 12 of the present invention explicitly recite that an image forming job issued from the terminal and stored in the job storage section is transferred to another image-forming-job managing apparatus based on a job output destination change command (see, for example, Fig. 9 of the drawings and the relevant description of that figure in the specification).

Note that the feature in which the "job storage section stores the image forming job issued from the terminal" is supported on page 6, lines 19 to 21 and page 7, line 27 to page 8, line 2 of the specification.

Accordingly, none of the presently pending claims is anticipated by Aoki.

102(e) Rejection Based on JP 10-078858:

In the final Office Action, claims 1, 8 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10-078858. This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

In JP 10-078858, a plurality of printer servers are connected to network cables, whereby each of the printer servers is connected to a printer. Each printer server has memory storage to store an obstacle history file on which obstacles are chronologically recorded. When any one of the printers is out of order, the printer server connected to this out-of-order printer queries the other printer servers about the obstacle history of their respective connected printers. As a result, the printer server selects, as a substitute printer, the printer having the lowest frequency of occurrence of obstacles. The printer server allows the substitute printer to output printing data. See paragraph [0011] of JP 10-078858, for example.

Now, turning to the presently pending invention according to independent claim 1 (independent claims 8 and 12 have similar features), an image-forming-job managing apparatus has a job transfer section that is configured to transfer an image forming job stored in a job storage section to another image-forming-job managing apparatus based on an output destination change command issued by a terminal. In contrast, JP 10-078858 does not have a structure remotely corresponding to such a job transfer section. Accordingly, claims 1, 8 and 12 are not anticipated by JP 10-078858.

New Claims 16-20:

New claims 16-20 have been added, whereby these claims recite additional features of the present invention that are not disclosed, taught or suggested by the two cited references listed in the final Office Action. For example, claim 18 recites that a machine information output section is configured to obtain machine information stored at all other image-forming-job

managing apparatuses. In column 8, lines 50-56 of Aoki, on the other hand, a printer server 32 obtains machine information directly from the printers 40a-40c themselves, and not from other printer servers that manage print jobs for those printer 40a-40c.

Accordingly, since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the final Office Action, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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